

Secretary of Frivolous Affairs

by
MAY TUTRELLE

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SYNOPSIS.

Jo Codman and her sister, Loulle, are left orphans. Their property has been swept away with the death of their father and they are compelled to cast about for some means to earn a living. Loulle answers an advertisement of an invalid who wants a companion. She declines the position. Loulle advertises for a position as companion, and Mrs. Hazard replies. She offers Loulle a position as her "secretary of frivolous affairs." Her chief work is to steer Mrs. Hazard's son and daughter in the right matrimonial path.

CHAPTER IV.

A Haphazard Meeting.

I was to make my bow to society the following week, the occasion being that wonderful reception at which Laura Hazard was to be the bright particular star. She was to hold the center of the stage in the limelight while I was to be tucked away on a back line of the chorus to find out Who's Who in Society and Why. It was a strenuous time for me, those days preceding the reception. I always went home so tired that Jo said I talked in my sleep about "color" and "texture," and jumped sometimes as if the dressmaker had stuck me with a pin. I wasn't to become an actual member of the family until they moved back home from the hotel.

Besides the mother, son and daughter, there was one other member of the family, John Crowninshield, Mrs. Hazard's brother, a lawyer whom the society reporters had let alone more than ten years ago. He had insisted upon becoming a confirmed old bachelor, and had dropped out of sight socially. He might have been a bachelor, but I was prepared to deny that he was old. True, there was a bit of silver at his temples, but it merely made him look distinguished and harmonized beautifully with his eyes; gray and clear that looked right through you like Mr. Partridge's, only more so. He had a handclasp that made you feel immediately as if he were your long-lost brother, and you'd swear by him to your very last breath.

Laura Hazard was tall, very blond, very pretty, altogether distingue—if you say such a thing about a woman—with broad shoulders and thin lips, giving one the impression that she had just materialized from a picture in a fashion book. She slipped into every-day conversation with me without any reference as to who I was or what I was. It gave me a clear understanding of my position. I was one of them; there was to be no doubt of me. I had made good until I proved otherwise. They had stuck me up on the top rung of the ladder, and all I had to do was to stay there.

My meeting with Hap took place on a crowded street at a time when I was more or less disheveled from a whole morning's sojourn in a milliner's shop. We were about to rush back to the hotel and grab luncheon—Jo saw me only at breakfast and when I was asleep—for we had an engagement with the dressmaker at two, when just as we reached the curb a young man driving a long, low, rakish, battleship-gray car, drew up behind the limousine and waved to us. "Just want to say I can't stop for luncheon, mother," he called. "Got a deal on with Peabody and haven't time."

He was about to change gear preparatory to leaving when he began to stare at me and I knew he was looking at the wisps of hair that dangled about my ears. His mother signaled to him.

"You must not neglect your meals for any deal," she said firmly. "You must take time—this is Miss Codman—think of your health. Let Peabody wait. Besides, luncheon is ready anyhow. We're in a hurry, too. I ordered it by telephone."

He acknowledged me and I bowed to him while she was still talking, and we both smiled. It was funny. The next minute I was in the limousine.

"Oh, all right," he agreed cheerfully, and waited for us to start.

I don't know what he thought as he followed; I don't know if he knew who I was. I leaned back in the limousine—thinking of only one thing—that I was missing the best club match at tennis in years, a thing I'd have given my head to see.

We were caught in a jam out of which the gray car wriggled ahead of us, so that when we reached the Somerset we found it drawing up to the curb and a most impatient young man pacing up and down the hallway of the suite.

"I've just got to see Peabody," he said, "and be at the ball game at three."

I knew my job when I saw it coming straight toward me.

"Who's going to pitch?" I asked.

It was the only thing I could think of in a hurry. It was electrical! He stopped short in his wild stride, stared at me an instant, and this time he did not look at the wisps of hair dangling about my ears; then he put out his hand, grabbed mine and pumped it up and down enthusiastically.



Illustrations by
V.L. BARNES

"Say, do you really understand baseball?" he asked.
"I do, really." The question was so identical his mother's that I smiled and he grinned back, thinking he understood even if he didn't. "I can almost tell when a man is going to bunt by the way he walks to the plate."

He grinned again, took a step closer—actually I thought he was going to kiss me—and gave my hand another up and down, with some additional pats for good measure.

"You're too good to be true," he announced.

"Goodness me!" I laughed. "Why, there are plenty of girls who understand baseball."

"Well, they don't travel in my set. No. Stupidest lot of girls you ever saw," he confided. A thought struck him so suddenly and pleasantly that it fairly jumped from his eyes, and he took another step closer. Really he kept me scared! "Don't you want to go this afternoon?"

Of course I couldn't, or the next afternoon, or even the next week. We were dated up for every day. I was awfully sorry. I knew right off I was going to like him. He was so easy to know, and good to look at, too, strong and husky, his skin tanned already as if he kept pretty much outdoors. His thick blond hair was worn long, a relic of football days, I suppose, and a characteristic forelock hung aslant one clear gray eye. Those eyes ran in the family.

We had an enthusiastic luncheon. It couldn't have been otherwise bubbling from such an enthusiastic young man with Mrs. Hazard holding in on that chuckle of hers while he talked "curves" and "fade-aways" and things she didn't understand any more than so much Chinese.

When the gray car finally drew away from the curb down below, Mrs. Hazard looked at me and chuckled.

"It worked!" she whispered. "It actually worked!" And as she looked at me one eye was curiously a-twinkle.

That was the only conversation I had with Hap until the night of the reception. I didn't have time. Sometimes I saw him from the limousine, but it was just a "zip" and we were both gone; sometimes I nodded to him across the room with the telephone receiver glued to my ear and my lips ready to frame an order when the "hello" came. I was Secretary of Frivolous Affairs, all right enough. There were days when we almost dined in the limousine between dressmakers and milliners, other days when we saw everybody down to the candlestick-maker; again when I copied memoranda until my arm ached.

And I had vainly fancied myself Cinderella with Mrs. Hazard as the fairy Godmother. When she waved the wand which was giving me my job, all I had to do was to come down the grand staircase looking for the Prince. In my opinion Cinderella had a snap sitting at home before the kitchen fire while the people who had that fall affair in hand got it going.

One little incident happened that



"Who's Going to Pitch?" I asked.

gave me something to think over during the drudgery of those days, and, with everything that happened afterward, I put it down in my mind as the beginning of things. Laura and I were on our way down Commonwealth avenue one afternoon, when suddenly she sat upright and looked through the door of the car.

"The Duc de Trouville!" she exclaimed, as another car passed.

I craned my neck inelegantly, but of course I did not see him; the car was gone. I knew that the duke had come to America to—well, who shall question the motives of a duke?

Something in her expression, the way she turned and looked at me seriously, intently, made the words significant. I was inexperienced enough then to jump at conclusions. He doesn't know many of these people and doesn't care to know them. He's go-

ing to like you, Loulle; you are so real, so very much just girl. He thinks we are superficial. Isn't that cheeky of him? I'm making myself believe he's coming here for my sake when I know he's after local color for a novel he's doing; slandering society and the idle rich in every chapter and getting poetical about cabbages and things. You'll look after him, won't you?"

"I'll cling to him," I assured her. "I shall be all alone myself."
"Don't you believe it," she said. "Right now I'm almost afraid of my laurels—that isn't a pun, dear. I have no doubt Hap will have you in a corner talking baseball if he can get you there, and will probably introduce you to the '09's. Besides Natalie has promised to look out for you"—Natalie was Hap's lady fair—"and John will tell you who everybody is. Mother is particularly anxious that you know the important ones." I tumbled from the skies a bit; I knew that was the reason I was there. "I wish you luck remembering. It's awfully hard, especially the former husbands, but we haven't much of that, dear. New Englanders stick to the death, you know. I suppose it's another example of their thrift. Now don't fall me about Winthrop, there's a dear. I don't want him running away before I have a chance to see him, and he will if he's bored. One other thing: Mother will see that you meet His Grace." She wagged a shapely forefinger at me impressively. "Loulle, talk French to him; your nicest most alluring French. We are angling for him for the summer."

"Angling?" I asked. I managed to keep the tone from being astonished. "Oh, yes, everybody is. Why not say so? It isn't always we have the opportunity of entertaining a duke. The best last season could produce was a German baron and an Hun-

"I don't love him; I don't even like him," she interrupted. "He's so polite, so terribly polite, so clever, so smooth, so polished that—well, I always feel just a little suspicious of him."
"Gracious!" I laughed. "Why, objection usually comes from exactly opposite reasons. You wouldn't have him otherwise, would you?"

"I don't know. Once Winthrop shook me good for skating on ice which he had warned me might give way." Winthrop, whose last name is Abbott, is the bucolic gentleman. "And, well, I'm awfully fond of Winthrop."

We both laughed.

"The Duchess de Trouville," she mused after awhile. "It is a pretty name, isn't it?"

CHAPTER V.

One of the Frivolous Affairs.

Notwithstanding my weary lids and aching limbs, I glided—actually—back and forth before the mirror on the memorable night of my entire life to society after Martha, Mrs. Hazard's maid, had hooked me into my gown, and I couldn't believe that the mirrored reflection was my own. There was only one thing needed to make me absolutely happy, and that was Jo. We had, all of us, moved into the old house made new, that morning, and it was the very first time in all our lives that Jo and I had been separated. I wanted her now. I wanted to cry a little happy tear on her shoulder and have her pat my hair. But I didn't have her. She had gone to a lecture, anyhow, on the Whereness of the Which, or something equally intellectual, and I was in the middle of one of the most beautiful suites I had ever seen—onyx bath, old-rose bed room, blue-brocade boudoir—suddenly, very much alone.

I don't know what I might have done. I'm sure I would have cried and spoiled my nose if there hadn't come, just at that particular minute, a knock on my blue-brocade boudoir door from Laura's side of it and saved me.

"Won't you come in?" she invited when I opened the door. "We will form a mutual admiration society. I know I am looking my best. I'm neither pale nor am I flushed. Isn't my gown beautiful?"

"You are exquisite," I told her, and she was, with her blond hair in a thick loose braid about her head and the simple, shimmering white gown. She laughed and kissed me French fashion on each cheek. I knew I flushed; I hadn't expected a caress.

"You mean that, too," she said, "or you wouldn't say it with the ring true in your voice."
"Of course I do," I replied. "I never say anything I don't mean."
"Not now," she laughed. "You'll learn soon."

I laughed, too, then we laughed together, a bit hysterically, for deep down we were both nervous. You see, it was my coming-out party.

"Now, what shall I say to you?" "You don't have to compliment me," I admonished.

"But I shall," she insisted. "You are lovely, and that gold gown is wonderful."
"Your mother is just too good to me," I told her, and I know there were tears under my lids, or wherever I keep tears, just waiting for me to blink to jump out. She didn't know I had to shine just a little brighter than any one else.

"I wanted a few jewels," she remarked, surveying herself, "but mother said no. She doesn't think a girl should wear jewels until she's married." She turned suddenly and signaled Caroline to withdraw. When the door had closed upon the departing figure of the maid she looked at me. "And that brings me to a request. Will you take Winthrop under your protection to-night? He doesn't know many of these people and doesn't care to know them. He's go-

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INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By E. O. SELLERS, Director of Evening Department, The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)

LESSON FOR MAY 18

JOSEPH MEETS HIS BRETHREN.

LESSON TEXT—Gen. 42:3-17.
GOLDEN TEXT—"Whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Gal. 6:7.

Joseph was thirty years of age when he reached his position of supreme authority, but we ought not to allow ourselves to forget those thirteen years of humiliation, during which he was betrayed, sold into slavery and neglected by those whom he befriended. Yet those were days of fidelity in his service, of victory over fierce temptation, of enduring unjust imprisonment—a long period of patient waiting but a valuable period in that now at thirty years of age he comes to this position of power fully equipped with that knowledge of men, control of himself and faith in God as to be properly fitted for the burden of responsibility thrust upon him.

Did Not Forget.

I. The Brothers Need, vv. 3-6. The famine was not confined to Egypt, but reached over to Canaan, where Jacob and his sons lived. The desperation of the famine is indicated by Jacob's command to buy, "that we may live, and not die." But Jacob is too old to travel, hence the brothers undertake the journey. Twenty-two years have passed since that experience when Joseph's brethren cast him into the pit. They have been years filled with wonderful experiences for Joseph. Now their attitude is changed; instead of being his tormentors they are suppliants at his feet! During these seven years of garnering Joseph had set up his own family and two sons were born, the names of whom were significant.

The possession of a child of his own would naturally quicken his inquiries as to his father's household, for he assumed that in the order of events his father must be dead.

II. A Brother's Memory, vv. 7-17. Joseph at once recognized his brothers, but treated them brusquely, demanding from whence they came and the purpose that brought them hither (v. 7). Again (vv. 8, 9) the text reminds us that Joseph remembered. Only God can forgive and forget. But Joseph is an inspiration to us that though we may not be able to forget we can forgive. The question might be raised, "Why then did Joseph simulate?" The answer is threefold: (1) Joseph desired to ascertain the characters of his brothers. Did they remember? Yes, for they replied that they were "twelve brethren." Ten were before him, one at home and "one is not." That their characters were not entirely changed is evidenced by their words, "We are true men" (v. 11), which of course was the truth. (2) Joseph desired to know of his father and of their home life. The accusation that the brothers are spies called forth the statement that the father, Jacob, is still alive. The third reason for this treatment developed out of these first two, viz., Joseph desired to reach his father and Benjamin, whom he had never seen. We do not commend Joseph's method as being of the highest ethical value, for his standard was not the standard of the man who knows Christ. Joseph is a type; there is only one perfect man, Jesus Christ, and Joseph points toward that promised Saviour.

Guilty Consciences.

Joseph knew his brothers told the truth about their not being spies, but he also knew that they lied when they asserted themselves to be true men and that one brother "is not." Here is the lesson of mistaken estimates of one's self and that a man's true value is known and appreciated. Little did they realize, however, that their falsehood was being read as it was uttered and that the man before whom they were standing was this same brother. Joseph affected not to believe any of their story and demanded proof (vv. 15, 16) of their assertions. After three days in jail he appeared to relent and ordered that only one of their number should remain as hostage. The result of all is shown in v. 21. After involuntarily leaving Simeon shut up in the Egyptian prison their minds traveled back to that time twenty years before and they remembered Joseph's anguish and distress when they would not hear, "therefore is this distress come upon us." Their guilty consciences are aroused.

Jacob's cry, "All things are against me," v. 36, was a mistake. Joseph was alive and exalted that he might save the life of Jacob and his children. Simeon was alive and drawing his brothers back to Egypt. Benjamin would come back safely.

Emphasize the fact that we cannot forget our wrong acts and that Joseph was not troubled by any such memories. Also emphasize the return of good for evil, Rom. 12:20, 21. Joseph's brethren were sowing the fruit of the seeds of envy and malice they had sown twenty years previously. So also was Jacob reaping the seeds of his deceit, for in spite of his great material prosperity he has great anguish of heart. We try to sow and not to reap. See that the seed thoughts in the heart are right. The grace of God forgives sin, but it remains a terrible fact in our lives.



"I'll Do My Best. The Duke Shall Be Ours."

garian count. Now, His Grace must be ours for the summer, dear, no matter who manages to marry him. He has developed a passion for Natalie since he learned that her money is her own, but Hap looms up a barrier there. We don't know whether she will be an inducement or otherwise."

I must confess I was just a little bit shocked, for Jo had pounded such old-fashioned notions into my head. "She isn't married yet," I remarked, thinking of my job. A part of which was to make Hap turn around and look.

"That's true. Anyhow I hope you and your French will help. Isn't it lucky you speak good French?"

That was one of the reasons of me, but of course she didn't know that.

"I'll do my best. The duke shall be ours. Vive le Duc!" I laughed. I thought of the bucolic Mr. Abbott and my task of encouraging Laura to marry a duke or notice the eligibles. There was no time like the present; I went at it as I thought brilliantly. "But why all this wonderful summer when you have decided to settle down a country housewife?"

"Oh, to look back upon," she smiled, "just as a girl likes to remember she was married in a white gown and orange blossoms. Besides, I haven't decided yet about that country housewife. Mother objects; not to Winthrop exactly, but the condition of affairs. I suppose I ought to assure myself I don't want a title!"

There was a chance to offer some excellent advice, but after such a brilliant opening I didn't have any to offer. I'm woefully deficient in all such matters. Jo has always done the advising in our family.

"So you are going after His Grace?" I parried.

"Oh, no. I'm going to assure myself I don't want him."
"Rather unpleasant for His Grace?" I laughed. "Suppose he should happen to fall in love with you during the process?"

"Oh, he won't," she replied. "He isn't crazy about me. It's Natalie. If I decide I want him I'll tell him the amount of my fortune."
"Oh!" I exclaimed, pretending I understood, even if I didn't. "Anyhow, I'll look after Mr. Abbott."

When Laura went below I lingered in the corridor looking down upon the Grand Stairway—it was a Grand Stairway—because I didn't have the courage as yet to venture into that wonderful below. The dowagers were arriving, but a younger crowd began to come up the stairway as the hour advanced. Mrs. Hazard appeared from somewhere suddenly, her eyes twinkling and her lips tight shut on a chuckle, as if the whole thing was a tremendous joke on somebody. I blew her a kiss as she went down, and thrilled as I watched her going. Shivered I suppose is what I really did.

Everything glittered, the lights, the gowns, the jewels; everything was strange and delightfully confusing. Straits from an orchestra floated up to me. I knew it was playing behind the palms; they always do. The air was heavy with the odor of flowers, and for the first time in my life I comprehended what it was to be intoxicated with sights and sounds.

I leaned there against the rail for an age; a spectator, completely out of the picture; like one's first day at the races—French races at that—not knowing the horses and the events. I finally decided to go down. I couldn't stay there looking over the rail for ever. I was expected to go down. I was wearing a gown that has cost Mrs. Hazard two thousand dollars for that especial purpose. And somewhere down there was Hap, and John Crowninshield, and the unknown duke concerning whom I was highly curious, and Natalie, who was going to look after me while I looked after the unknown Mr. Abbott.

I strained my eyes for a familiar face in that vast throng as I descended very, very leisurely. I had not realized how really awful it is to be alone in a crowd, how hard to pretend you're expecting every minute to speak to some one when you're not. My assurance? I had none. I was quaking with fear. But I had a wild idea that I wasn't quite lost as long as I was on the stairs. Little groups descended by me, but not with me. I was conspicuously alone. Several times people glanced at me curiously. I had another wild idea of speaking to some one. I had heard that society folk can't remember half the people they meet; but after all I hadn't the courage. I abandoned that and thought of a whole procession of things, all equally absurd, while every step was taking me down, down into—I knew not what.

I paused on a landing and tried to appear casual as my eyes searched vainly for Hap or John Crowninshield. I knew it was foolish even to hope; there was only one chance in a thousand and in that brilliant, wriggling jam. I wondered why I hadn't thought to make an appointment. No. They'd think I was crazy. Did people in society do such things? Gracious! My knees were getting wobbly from pure, unadulterated fright, and I stood glued to that landing as if it were a lifeboat on an open sea. But I couldn't stay there. People already were staring. I put out my foot, feeling for the edge of the step as one does in the dark, another, and another. I was at the bottom. It was the end. A move and I would be adrift! I turned my head in one last desperate attempt to see some one, and found myself looking straight at Hap and a dark girl whom I knew must be Natalie. I came awfully near kissing him that time, but Natalie—for it was she—put out a protecting hand, rather languid and fishy, but a ne'er-to-be-forgotten hand.

"We've been waiting for you," she drawled, pressing my fingers and smiling a mere shadow of a smile that suited her calm, majestic beauty.

I smiled back, a scared, relieved sort of smile, and I put that "waiting" down in my memory. I only hoped some day I could make a sacrifice for her. And I almost got my hope.

"I was beginning to worry for fear we had missed you," she went on, after a most effective pause in which she regarded me through drooping lids. "Woodbury," she never called him Hap—"do you see the Abercrombie? They were here just a moment ago. I want them to meet Miss Codman."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Horticulturist Honored.

Harry James Veitch, on whom the